

The Living Stones of the Holy Land Trust Newsletter



No 3: April 2012

An ecumenical trust seeking to promote contacts between Christian communities in Britain and those in the Holy Land and neighbouring countries. UK registered charity No. 1081204

Dear Friends,

We are very excited about this issue of our newsletter. It tells you something about who we are and how we see our mission:

- ❖ **Pilgrimage:** We went as a group of 23 people to Israel/Palestine this year as part of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity, in association with the ABCD and with Friends of BibleLands. I hope you will enjoy the supplement we have put together, with photos and comments. We hope to repeat the pilgrimage in two years time (it was so good!), and also we are talking about a pilgrimage to the Christian community in Jordan, perhaps in 2013. (All these are in addition to the pilgrimages which have been led by our Honorary President Duncan Macpherson for various church groups.)
- ❖ **Education:** Fr. Ra'ed, the Catholic priest from the one village in the West Bank which is still 100% Christian, is coming to Britain in June to give the Michael Prior Memorial Lecture (see next page), and to tour England and Scotland, speaking to several Churches Together groups. Look out for venues and book the date in your diary! And please display the poster page wherever you can. Also individual trustees welcome opportunities to speak to congregations, etc. Additionally, we support Palestinian postgraduate theology students and the tour guide degree at Bethlehem University.
- ❖ **Discussion:** We have established a Theology group focusing on the Christians of the Middle East, in particular Israel/Palestine, and will be publishing the first edition of our *Living Stones Journal* with contributions from this group, along with other commissioned writings, later this year.
- ❖ **Assisting projects:** We want to help some of the projects that we saw on our pilgrimage in the Holy Land which need financial assistance. Things are moving and are exciting – but we need your support.
- ❖ **Your support:** We need your presence at our meetings and events and we need your subscriptions and your general advocacy for who we are and what we stand for – and please also consider remembering our work in your Will.
- ❖ **Meeting you:** See us at Greenbelt this year or at Heythrop (or try to catch Fr Ra'ed in London, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Edinburgh or Glasgow – next time to the Midlands and North) Keep watching our website at www.livingstonesonline.org.uk, make it one of your favourites, and write to us at chairman@livingstonesonline.org.uk. We really look forward to meeting you and sharing our interest and enthusiasm.

Help us to help you support the Christian community in the Middle East, and learn from them together.

With best wishes,

Colin South, Chairman



The
Living Stones of the Holy Land Trust

MICHAEL PRIOR
2012 MEMORIAL LECTURE

*“Peace and Justice:
a Christian Viewpoint
from the Holy Land”*

will be given by

*Reverend Doctor Raed Awad Deeb Abusahlia
at 4.00pm on Wednesday, 13th June 2012 in the
Marie Eugenie Room, Heythrop College, University of London
Kensington Square, London W8 5HN*

Born in Zababdeh in Palestine, Father Raed was ordained priest by the Latin Patriarch in 1990 and began his priestly ministry in parishes in Jordan. After completing higher studies in philosophy at the Lateran University in Rome, Father Raed served as Professor of Philosophy at the Latin Seminary at Beit Jala and as Chancellor of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, until appointed parish priest of the Latin Church in Taybeh (biblical Ephraim) in the Palestinian West Bank, where he is active in initiatives for peace and justice such as the “Olive Branch Foundation” and “Lamps for Peace in the Holy Land”.

ALL WELCOME
Donations to Living Stones

An ecumenical trust seeking to promote contacts between Christian communities in Britain and those in the Holy Land and neighbouring countries.

UK registered charity No. 1081204

www.livingstonesonline.org.uk

News from the Theology Group:

The Living Stones Theology Group has met twice now under the capable leadership of Dr. Mary Grey, visiting Professor St. Mary's, Strawberry Hill. The inaugural meeting in September 2011 clarified our vision and purpose, and our President, Rev. Dr. Duncan Macpherson, presented his paper on '*What is to be done? Addressing issues facing Christians in the Middle East and finding an agenda for the Living Stones Theology Group.*'. This was well received and we touched on the 'Arab Spring' and its implications.

In the second paper entitled '*Middle Eastern Christian Ecumenical Theology and its wider significance*', presented by Dr Anthony O'Mahoney of Heythrop College at our February meeting, we heard about the exciting developments towards understanding between the Roman Catholic Church and some branches of the Orthodox Community, which have led to permission for sharing the Eucharist in some situations.

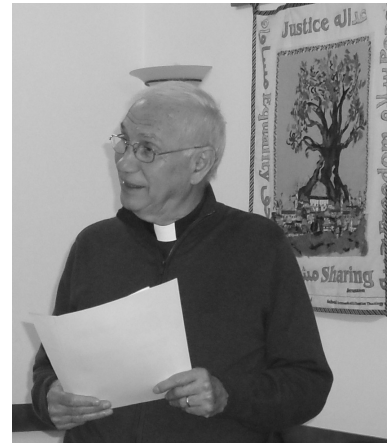
The next meeting will be in May this year and will focus on a paper presented by Colin South, the Chairman of Living Stones, entitled somewhat controversially, '*Accepting the fact of death, we are freed to live more fully - A reflection on freedom and liberty in Israel and Palestine*'

The object of this debate is to inform, improve and clarify thinking in relation to the Christian community in the Middle East among members and generally in the UK, and to assist in the contribution that Living Stones and other organisations represented in this ecumenical group can make to our work together in the Middle East. Conscious of the suffering of the Palestinian community and within Christian Middle Eastern communities in general, we attempt to work on a theology and spirituality of solidarity, accompaniment and reconciliation that we hope will contribute to peace and justice in the area.

It is hoped that many, if not all, the papers presented will find a place in the Living Stones Journal, the first edition of which will be published in the autumn.



Three eminent Palestinian clerics we met on our pilgrimages:



Fr Ra'ed Abusahlia (RC, Taybeh), who will deliver this year's Michael Prior Memorial Lecture, Archbishop Elias Chacour (Melkite-Greek Catholic, Ibellin), and Canon Naim Ateek (Anglican, Jerusalem).

Ealing Abbey Parish Pilgrimage

A Living Stones pilgrimage to the Holy Land (including Jordan) for the Roman Catholic parish of Saint Benedict in Ealing, West London comprised 30 pilgrims led by their parish priest, Father Peter Burns, and Living Stones honorary president Deacon Duncan Macpherson.

In addition to visiting the usual holy places and tourist sites in Israel-Palestine, the group visited Bethlehem University, worshiped with the Greek Catholic parish in Bethlehem and toured the home for abandoned children run by Vincentian sisters in Bethlehem.

Other meetings with Palestinian living stones included a meeting with the parish priest and members of community of the Latin Church in Nablus and with the inspirational parish priest of Taybeh, Father Raed Abusahliah. In addition to visiting Petra, Jerash Pella and Mount Nebo in Jordan, the pilgrims were received at the Latin Church in Madeba, the traditional site of the imprisonment of John the Baptist.



The Living Stones of the Holy Land Trust

UK registered charity No. 1081204

MEMBERSHIP entitles you to our regular newsletters, a copy of the Living Stones Journal to be published annually, free attendance at conferences and other major events, news of our Scholarship programme, notification of pilgrimages and much more. For current news and other items see our website at www.livingstonesonline.org.uk.

Please send your form to 48 Strickland Way, ORPINGTON, BR6 9UE together with EITHER a cheque for £20 payable to Living Stones OR the Standing Order Mandate. If you are a UK tax payer please ALSO complete the Gift Aid form. **Personal Details:**

Name:
Address:
Post Code:
E-mail address:

I am also interested in: (please tick as appropriate)

- serving on the Living Stones Committee as Trustee
- contributing articles or news items about the churches in the Middle East
- participating in a Theology Group
- attending conferences in London; Oxford; Birmingham;
 Durham; Edinburgh; Cardiff
- receiving the Journal
- receiving newsletters, etc, by e-mail attachment

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To the Manager of
(name of your Bank/Building Society)

Address:

Postcode:

Please pay the sum of twenty pounds/ £20 annually on:
..... (insert date) **until further notice in writing**

From:

Your account name:

Your account number:

Your Bank Sort Code:

To:

LIVING STONES Account No: 8913 7808; Code: 09-01-55

Your signature:

Date:

Your Address:

Postcode:

DONATIONS & LEGACIES

Living Stones is very happy to accept donations and to help with legacies. Both can be Gift Aided.

GIFT AID DECLARATION

As a registered charity, Living Stones can recover basic rate tax on your membership and other donations provided you pay UK income tax or capital gains tax equal to or more than the amount of relief LIVING STONES is claiming in the tax year that the donation was made.

I wish LIVING STONES to reclaim tax on all donations I have made for the six years prior to this year and on all future donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise.

Title: Forename(s)

Surname:

Address:

Postcode:

Signature:

Date:

Please send all forms and enquiries to Living Stones at 48 Strickland Way, ORPINGTON, Kent, BR6 9UE.

- NOTES:
1. Please notify LIVING STONES of any change in your above details or in your tax circumstances
 2. You can cancel this declaration at any time by notifying LIVING STONES.
 3. If you pay tax at the higher rate, you can claim further relief in your Self-Assessment tax return.